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Vitalii Slustin¹, Olena Syvachuk²

¹PhD student NU “Zaporizhzhia Polytechnic”

²senior teacher NU “Zaporizhzhia Polytechnic”

INFORMATION WARFARE AS A MEANS OF INFLUENCING SOCIETY

The history of the term "information war" dates back to ancient times. Previously, any deception of the enemy in order to win was called "military trickery", but today it has a much more complex meaning. Information warfare is a weapon of mass destruction. Today, the information war has become one of the most dangerous types of weapons. Information warfare may: include a collection of tactical information; guarantee security of its own information resources; spread propaganda or misinformation to demoralize the enemy's army and population; undermine the quality of the enemy's information and prevent the enemy's ability to gather information.

Information warfare is often conducted in conjunction with cyber and psychological warfare with the aim of wider coverage of targets, with the involvement of radio-electronic warfare and network technologies. The primary method of conducting intellectual property (IP) protection is through information warfare, carried out via information operations.

The purpose of the information war is to weaken the moral and material forces of the opponent or competitor and to strengthen our own. It provides measures of propagandistic influence on human consciousness in the ideological and emotional spheres. At the same time, the destruction caused by information wars in social psychology and the psychology of individuals is

quite commensurate in scale and significance, and sometimes exceeds the consequences of armed wars.

Information warfare considers information as a separate object or as a potential weapon and profitable target. Information war can be considered as a qualitatively new type of combat, active countermeasures in the information space. Information warfare is an attack on the information function, regardless of the means used. Specific weapons are used in conducting strategic information wars. This weapon does not cause physical damage but can lead to a real war.

An analysis of the development of the situation around Ukraine gives every reason to assert that today our state has encountered a new form of military operations. Gerasimov's Doctrine can be considered the beginning of a new era of hybrid war against Ukraine.

Gerasimov's Doctrine is foreign policy doctrine, developed by the chief General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, Valery Gerasimov. The doctrine rethinks the modern concept of interstate conflict and puts military actions along with political, economic, informational, humanitarian, and other nonmilitary measures. The doctrine became known after its publication in February 2013 and subsequent acts of aggression of Russia against Ukraine, which completely coincide with theses of this doctrine.

Specialists are especially concerned about the targeting of the Russian "Gerasimov doctrine" on exploiting the weak links of the Western principle of management decision-making, which is based on system of checks and balances. In contrast to this, Russian model of management, according to Gerasimov's ideas, organically combines all power institutions into a single whole, making coordination between them extraordinarily easy. The doctrine provides the ratio of non-military and military actions.

The information campaign against Ukraine launched by the Russian Federation is a rather deep and multi-level aggression. It includes many factors aimed at weakening Ukraine politically, economically, militarily, and informationally for the entire world community to exclude the Ukrainian issue from the agenda and, thus, to completely occupy Ukraine and to destroy all demoralized resistance efforts in the future.

To effectively counteract the information war, counter measures must be taken regularly. Mass media play a major role in solving this problem. The media's focus on specific facts or aspects of a conflict shapes the audience's opinion, influencing the desired reaction. Mass media provide opportunities to turn a small conflict into a big confrontation or, conversely, to quickly level a serious problem. The course of the conflict itself largely depends on the media's attitude to the event, their bias and involvement. Public individuals with an active stance in life play a significant role in countering the information

war by disseminating information on the internet that diverges from what is externally imposed on society.

The main challenge today is how to take systematic steps to respond to Russian information warfare. The study shows that Russia's strategy is hybrid and flexible, has many faces and many dimensions, for lies and aggression. In addition, it has a unique ability to transform itself into the forms of democratic narratives and tools, and even into national forms. It uses democracy against itself. And this is what makes it so unique, and the fight against it so difficult. But at a time when information is increasingly being used as a tool in war, we have no other alternative but to fight against it, to strip weapons of malicious influence, to tame the aggressor.